



Natural Resources Conservation Service
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October 11, 2007

UTAH BULLETIN UT300-08-01

SUBJECT: LTP- PROGRAM CONTRACTING SYSTEM (PROTRACTS) CONTRACT EVALUATIONS

Purpose: To provide additional guidance to field offices when prior cost list errors prevent NRCS from paying the correct, earned amount to contract participants.

Expiration Date: September 30, 2008

As a streamlining and common sense alternative to correcting a cost list (no longer an option), national programs staff has suggested that we increase units so that a correct payment can be made. This approach has raised questions about improper payments and false certification of conservation practice "extents."

As announced by NRCS FADP Director during a national teleconference on September 13, 2007, the NRCS CFO has verbally endorsed this recommendation. However, it is critical that this approach only be used as a last resort, and that ample, adequate documentation exist to substantiate the "additional" units. District Conservationists will, upon discovering that a prior year cost list is in error (and only when ready to make payment):

1. Through the respective Area Programs Specialist, submit a request to Lisa Coverdale, ASTC-Programs. Request will include a reason for the request, practice code, difference between the payment based on prior year cost list and the payment that the producer should receive. The request will include the DC's recommended unit adjustment.
2. NHQ will be contacted by Utah Programs staff, seeking concurrence.
3. Upon receiving concurrence, the DC, SAO, and Financial Management staff will be notified by an email from the ASTC-Programs providing the date of NHQ's concurrence, name of NHQ programs staff providing the concurrence, and instructions to proceed.
4. The field office shall file a copy of this email in the contract file AND fully document the reason behind the action taken. The email does NOT replace full and adequate documentation by the approving official.

This approach should alleviate employee's concerns about false certification of conservation practice extents.

Contact: Questions concerning this process should be directed to the appropriate Area Programs Specialist.

/S/

RON DAVIDSON
Acting State Conservationist

Distribution: E